## MOUNTAIN LAUREL.

Helen Burnett was wont to recall, with no small degree of luxurious self-commiseration, mingled with some very real regret, a little "episode" in her life which had occurred when she was a trifle younger -and more than a trifle cruder, she would have told you.

Though she would not have admitted it, there was in Helen's composition a strong vein of something akin to romance, which had been fostered during her earlier years by the constant and eager perusal of literature of a highly wrought and perfervid character; and which a later assimilation of authors of the modern school, realists. sensitists, pessimists-the more pessimistic the better-had been wholly unable to eradicate. Though Helen thought of herself as decidedly "advanced," and jeered pitilessly at emotions of a tender nature, there lurked deep down in her inmost heart a secret belief in the potency of love, the intense, undying, highly dramatic affection celebrated by the old-fashioned poets and novelists; and it was this belief that had led her to dignify the little affairs of her girlhood to rather an absurd degree.

In each of the many little flirtations in which, like other young and pretty girls, she had engaged, she had hoped to find the realization of her dreams-the incarnation of an ideal by no means paltry; and, in each instance, had at once proceeded to invest the other party to the affairusually some crude and commonplace youth-with all the attributes of a hero. Naturally, this was rather a strain upon the mediocrity of Helen's youthful admirers, and the highly dramatic situations Helen had a peculiar faculty for bringing about, together with tragic missives, frequent which she treated them, usually had the effect of reducing them to a state of comever, that this consummation had been reached, Helen would have discovered that the youth in question was not "the only man she could ever love;" the liftle comedy would have been played out; the curtain been elevated to the pedestal that was instage properties.

It was not, however, till she met Carroll -hardly a fit subject for apotheosis-that she had been sufficiently interested to lose sight of the dramatic responsibilities of the situation-so far as in her lay-and to give herself up wholly to what would have been a very sweet and tender attachment in a nature less impersonally interested in its

It happened, one summer more than a year ago, that Helen, quite worn out by the rush of her first winter in society, went to see a school friend who had married the superintendent of a large coal mining in-Kentucky. The denizens of Hillsboroughrather to Helen's disappointment-were not the uncouth, unlettered creations of John Fox and Charles Egbert Craddock. They differed in slight degree from the inhabitants of other small towns remote from the larger cities, but to Helen, whose idea of the country was derived chiefly from the friends, village life (and perhaps the village characteristics were a trifle prowas a decided novelty.

The young girls of the town; overcoming the awe inspired by Helen's Redfern tollets, lost no time in calling on her; and, on the Sunday afternoon following her arrival, a bevy of gallants-a trifle sun-browned and rather ill at ease as to the disposition of their hands and feet, yet otherwise differing little from the men she met in town-came to do her honor. That evening, by preconcerted arrangement with her hostess, Dick Carroll, the manager of the mine in which Mrs. Parkhurst's husband was interested, came to take her to church. Helen rejoiced in Carroll as a type-a type of which she had read in the stories of Mary Hallock Foote and Wolcott Balestier, she told herself. He was certainly a strong, picturesque figure, even in the unobtrusive business suit he wore, and Helen's fancy at once clothed him in the traditional blouse, top boots and broad felt hat which she regarded as the habitual accompaniments of men connected with mines and mining.

There was a sort of rugged ease in Carroll's manner, and Helen abserved with a feeling amounting to gratitude that he offered her his arm, instead of grasping her own between the wrist and elbow, after the manner of the village druggist, who had taken her for a stroll the day before. But, in spite of the romantic interest with which she invested him, she was not wholly blind to an occasional lapse in grammar, and when at church he joined lustily in the singing (led by a wailing reed organ and conducted by an earnest and perspiring brother who occasionally missed the pitch). Helen was conscious of a slight feeling of annoyance. For a moment the memory of the beautiful, impressive service of her own beloved "Calvary" at home crossed her mind; but Helen was determined not to mar the pleasure of her visit by invidious comparisons and suppressed the thought as in some degree disloyal to her friend. She interested herself in the sermon, vigprous if crude; in the people, who, in kindly fashion, came up to greet her after service; and in Dick's rather labored conversation on the way home, though she was conscious of a wish that he would tell er something of the strange, wild life in the mines, inctead of indulging in inanities about the weather and perfunctorily inquiring what she thought of Hinsborough. However, she felt her patience in some degree rewarded when, later, Carroll said suddenly, "You have never been in a coal mine, I suppose. Miss Burnett?" Then, turning to Helen's friend, who sat with them on the shadowy porch: "Why couldn't you bring Miss Burnett over to the mine to-morrow, Mrs. Parkhurst? We won't be busy, I guess, and I'll be glad to show you 'round.

"Well," answered Mrs. Parkhurst, tenta-"if you think Will wouldn't "Oh, Parkhurst won't care," said Carroll readily, and when Helen added an eager, "Oh, Lottie, do let's go!" Mrs. Parkhurst, who really had no valid reason for refusing, consented.

The following afternoon Helen came down dressed for her ride, looking trim and stylish in her dark, close-fitting habit, her trreproachable collar and "four-intled with truly masculine skill, her severe high hat and entirely correct riding boots and gloves. The conventional riding skirt in Hillsborough was a flowing dark skirt, an anomalous waist, and any sort or condition of hat, varying according to the whim or disposition of the rider, from a was a sort of compromise, the silk hat being replaced by a soft felt traveling cap of her husband's, which looked a trifle incongruous with her tailor-made habit. When they reached the mouth of the nine, where Carroll was waiting for them, Helen could hardly repress a cry of deight in his appearance. Nothing could have been more perfect, she told herself. There were the dark blue blouse, slightly open at the throat, the fustian trousers, half hidden in the high top boots, and the slouch hat doffed as he came to help her dismount was the one thing needed to give the finishing touch to his costume. She felt like applauding, as she might have lone the entrance of some favorite actor in a particularly successful makeup; and her dramatic nature reveiled in the strong. icturesque figure with its thoroughly harnonious setting-the high, steep hills in the background, the open shaft yawning beside him, and the grimy miners swarming about him like the chorus in an opera. earance, it was certain that he was equalcharmed with her own-though it could hardly have been on the ground of its harmony with her surroundings, for in spite of the strict suitability of her attire, Helen's olond fairness was as much out of place in that rugged scene as would have been a rare bit of cut glass amid the coarse furnishings of a kitchen table.

Lottle, with amiable self-abnegation, proceeded to efface herself leaving Dick free to devote himself to Helen. It was not without some trepidation that Helen entered the yawning cavity: looking a trifle grewsome even in the light of the bright June day; and when in the sudden darkness she felt a strong grasp on her arm, and heard Carroll's voice in a reassuring mur-mur, a delightful thrill of dependence went

Down in the mine Carroll was at his best. In the weird half light of the miners' lamps, with lurid shadows falling on his handsome face, he looked like a could only see the eager, loving face so painting by Rembrandt; and as he close to her own. painting by Rembrandt; and as he explained the processes, in language simple, yet vivid and strong, Helen forgot to observe certain little idiocyncracies in his speech; and grammatical lapses that orspansed unnoted. Even when they went up could only see the eager, loving face so close to her own.

"I do not know—I"—she faltered.

"Helen, try, do try to love me! I love were going to the seashore, it was in the you so, so much; my darling, my love—

He lost himself in tender incoherencies, dinarily would have grated upon her now drawing her closer and closer till his breath and wired her father:

"Expect me home to-morrow (Thursday) time to go.

The next afternoon Dick's sister and a friend, Miss Duckwall, called on Helen. Nellie Carroll struck Helen as possessing all of Dick's imperfections, without his redeeming picturesqueness. She was essentially commonplace and unrefined, and Helen observed at once that she was making a minute mental inventory of the details of her costume. Miss Carroll talked in a high, nasal tone, quite monopolizing the conversation, to which her friend (a delightfully pretty, simpering little creature, in a muslin gown and much-beflowered bat) contributed only an occasional giggle. She, too, covertly studied Helen, who was sure both girls could have given a graphic description of every detail of her ress, the arrangement of her hair and the disposition of her draperies, at the end of their lengthy call, which Helen found a rifling fatiguing. However, the disagreethle impression caused by the interchange of civilities had faded by the time Dick came that evening, and was only faintly renewed when he asked for a trite, popular air that was her special detestation, after she had sung for him, in her beauticultivated soprano, the Schubert's 'Serenata" and a quaint old English ballad

with an exquisite setting. The days went by swiftly and, in the main, pleasantly. The kindly housewives of the town vied with one another in entertaining Mrs. Parkhurst's city guest, and numerous invitations to "spend the day" and to "come to tea" poured in upon them. Dick Carroll was almast a daily visitor at the Parkhurst cottage, and when Lottie's husband returned from a business trip he chaffed Helen unmercifully about the conquest she had made.

Hillsborough was unusually gay that summer. There were church sociables and parties innumerable, to all of which functions Dick escorted Helen; church suppers, at which the young ladies of the congregation, in impracticable aprons of Paris muslin adorned with bows of blue and pink, served to those misguided persons who were present for "sweet charity's sake," collations of sour strawberries and halfliquid ice cream. The parties were even more of a tax upon Helen's urbanity. There were no dancing at these entertainments, and the guests, seated in couples about the four walls of the room, indulged when some local musician was led, blushing and protesting, to the ubiquitous parlor organ, there to render in a voice quite free from any attempt at cultivation, some worn-out popular song of the day. Another feature of these affairs was the singing of a male quartet, upon which musical organization the Hillsborough people ooked with a rather unquestionable feeling of pride. The leader of the church ly worthy-or unworthy-object would have | singing "carried the air;" the village druggist, a meek, lisping little man, with a evitably and invariably one of Helen's baritone was completely inaudible and therefore inoffensive, and Dick, alas! enthusiastically "sang bass." He would come out strong upon the last two words of each phrase, in insistent iteration and a deep, sepulchral voice that made Helen shudder and did more to dispel her illusions concerning him than any atrocity he could have committed

But Helen tried heroically not to smile at the crudities of the social conditions of Hillsborough, remembering the kindly attentions that had been showered upon her as a guest, and the hospitalities that were freely offered to her, a stranger in their

Each day brought her increased strength and new pleasure, and the long walks with Dick beside the narrow river or up the steep mountain paths were all strangely, sweetly novel to her. Her flirtations, hereterest in a little mountain town in southern | tofore, had been carried on in crowded ballrooms, where tender speeches were likely to be cut short by the approach of importunate partners; but here, under the open skies, high upon some grassy cliff overlooking the turbulent little river that scolded and fretted in its narrow banks, the little town lying beyond, picturesque in this remote perspective, here, indeed, each word had a new and tender value, each glance was fraught with a meaning new and strangely sweet.

One day, in early June, there was a picnic at a lovely, ideal spot on a cliff far down the river, and all Hillsborough was in attendance. The young people went in a nounced and exaggerated in Hillsborough) large wagon, drawn by four sturdy mules, and driven by a loud-voiced, facetious young farmer, whose flashes of wit called | floor. In the center of the room stood a forth screams of laughter from the gay crowd, massed together in a shrieking, chattering Babel in the huge wagonbed. Helen had heard with dismay of this arrangement, being extremely averse to noise and crowds; and she could have | bowl. On the mantel was a lambrequin of showered fervent blessings on Dick when, on the appointed day, he drove up in a dilapidated barouche-the one carriage the sorted styles and sizes, two large sea local stables afforded-and suggested that they, with Mr. and Mrs. Parkhurst, should drive out together. Dick was amply re- of parti-colored artificial flowers, while anwarded by the evident pleasure of the ladies, though Mr. Parkhurst's humorous allusions to "a purely family party" brought a flush alike to Dick's brown cheek and Helen's fair face.

reached the picnic grounds they found the other silvered frame, containing what others already there. The ladies were be- Helen found to be an obituary poem surginning to set out the substantial if not | mounted by a dove-the whole, as andainty lunch, and the men were feeding a | nounced in large type at the top, "in memfire, over which old Mrs. Davis, the village oriam" of Dick's father. A parlor organ oracle and newsmonger, had hung a coffee | stood in one corner of the room, while in pot on two crossed sticks, in a most de- another was a bureau, decorated with nulightfully gypsyish fashion. Dick and Helen | merous crocheted mats and beribboned were soon in the midst of the crowd, and, toilet bottles, and looking strangely out of to her secret dismay. Helen soon found place amid the respectable haircloth chairs herself shricking and chattering as loudly and sofas. The room had a damp, moldy as the rest. Nelly Carroll seized upon her | smell, and Helen's spirits sank as she sat with a sort of possessive, half-patronizing on the stiff, uncomfortable sofa, trying to pride which Helen was at a loss to under- get out range of those dreadful portraits. stand, and which secretly annoyed her. To escape this she offered her services to old Mrs. Davis, who received her with marked | ing heart recognized as the original of one cordiality and at once began to comment of the portraits, and whose face was with much freedom upon Dick's evident in- | flushed and heated from preparing the

marked, "that I never seen nothin' to equal | ham dress, made in some semblance of the it. Miss Helen. Lucy Duckwall is jest no-where, and I reckon it ain't very strang?. thin, high-shouldered figure; and the hand for she can't hold a candle to you. Dick's | she extended to Helen seemed to the girl been keepin' company with her for more'n | pathetically rough and work-worn. two years, but he quit off all of a sudden when you came, and Jim 'lows it serves a sort of a catarrhal snuffle, "I am glad her just right-frisky little piece!" you come 'round to-day. Dick's been tellher just right-frisky little piece!"

Helen flushed angrily. What right had ing me about you, and I reckoned we'd betthese people to interest themselves in her ter get acquainted. affairs? What did she care for commonplace little Lucy Duckwall and her rustic very much in evidence, which gave her an over? He was nothing to her-nothing? appearance almost ghoulish, and which re-She stopped with the fierce denial on here minded Helen painfully of the terror of her tongue, and Mrs. Davis, noting only the childhood days-a shark's head which girl's flush and evident confusion, made her own deductions, which she afterwards summed up concisely for the benefit of her husband, the long-suffering "Jim," "She's pretty hard hit, I reckon.'

"Helen," called Lottie-to Helen's intense relief-"come to lunch." And Helen went, mingled feelings of anger, resentment and I reckon you're used to better, but such self-contempt struggling in her breast. Af- as it is you're welcome to it. I told Dick ter lunch the young people showed a I hoped you wouldn't be stand-offish and marked disposition to stroll off in couples. hold yourself above us; but he said you this way and that, leaving the elders to gather up the dishes and repack the baskets; and when Dick came to ask Helen to stroll with him further along the cliff she was tempted to refuse, seeing Mrs. Davis's keen eye upon her, and catching sight of | mother went on. She's a nice, good girl Lucy's piteous little face; but she did not | that would make any man a good wife. like to seem ungracious, and she had no excuse to offer. Something in Dick's manner, as they moved away, made her feel vaguely uncomfortable. The mental at-mosphere seemed charged with electricity that might at any moment concentrate itself, and Helen began to wish she had stayed with Lottie. Suddenly she stopped. A laurel tree, covered with faint pink, waxen blossoms grew on a little rise above

"How exquisite!" she cried, involuntarily: and Dick, gazing at the fair, upturned face, inwardly echoed the exclamation. He sprang up the ledge and broke great branches of the lovely, fragile blossom; then, laden with the blooming boughs, he came down to where Helen sat like a Dryad "up to date." in her pretty organdie and quaint "picture hat." As he stooped to lay the blossoms in her lap their hands touched for an instant; a sharp thrill shot across Dick and communicated itself to Helen. Their eyes met, and Helen was angry, disgusted, that she felt her lids droop, her face flush violently and her heart begin to beat as it had not done since the days of her first boy lover. Dick was painfully embarrassed and his effort at an easy, commonplace remark was hardly a pronounced success. As for Helen, where was all her vaunted tact, her social grace and skill? She was angry with herself that she could only sit there silent, blushing like a silly schoolgirl—she with her nineteen years, her winter in society, her summer at Bar Harbor—trembling like a rustic Phyllis before an ardent Strephon. Dick stood leaning against the ledge, looking down at her, so charmingly pretty in spite of herself in her confusion, until at length he found voice to say, rather un-

"Miss Helen, I reckon it's no use to tell you what you already know. I never loved any woman in my life as I love you, and if you will only-' Helen sprang to her feet. "Oh, don't, den't!" she cried. He caught her hands and held them

"Please listen to me, Helen," he said. You don't suppose I don't know how little have to offer; but I love you dearly, Helen, and I'll do my best. Helen, don't

again to the light of day the glamor had quite faded, and with ratner more than her wonted graciousness she granted Dick permission to call on her the following even-

uncertain, distressed. "Oh," she panted. "I did not mean-I am not sure. Please, please let me go!" But Dick was intoxicated with the first draught of love's sweet wine, and he only caught her to him, holding her close and kissing her again and again. Helen was stunned—bewildered. She hardly knew whether she was angry or glad. She only longed to escape—to fly back to Lottie—to free herself from this masterful clasp. The romantic pleasure she had found in her other love affairs was wholly wanting in fully at her.
this. It was so sudden, so violent, there "Thank you," she said. "It was good of this. It was so sudden, so violent, there was no time for self-analysis and dramatic effect. It was rather too intensely realistic to be altogether agreeable, though Helen was aware of a strangely sweet quality in the affair which no other had possessed for her. She freed herself again from Dick's encirching arm, and stood irresolute, not daring to lift her eyes to his. Very gently Dick drew her to a seat upon a grassy knoll

and sank down beside her.
"Look here, Helen," he said earnestly. so earnestly that she forgot to be critical of his English, "I didn't mean to say all this to you at first. I know I haven't got much to offer a woman-such a woman as you, anyway; but I couldn't help telling you so. If you'll marry me, Helen, you shan't regret it. I know I can take care of you, and I know I won't be a poor man always. Helen, won't you give me a chance-won't you promise to marry me?" Helen sat looking across the river at the little town sleeping in the afternoon sunshine-her future home, perhaps-she thought. Then a vision of her own beautiful home crossed her mind-but, somehow, to-day it came to her that all that richness and beauty would seem poor and plain without love. And-she-did-love-Dick. "Helen," whispered Dick softly, "will you

"Yes, Dick," she answered, very low. And so it was settled. Later Helen and Dick joined the others with an air of elaborate unconsciousness that deceived nobody. Mrs. Davis cast at them a knowing glance, for which Helen could have struck her; Lottie nobly seconded Helen's efforts, ably suppressing her fun-loving husband, who yearned to tease her; while poor Lucy Duckwall looked as if on the verge of tears. The ride home was rather a silent one, in spite of Will Parkhurst's gay sallies. Lottie dramatized serene unconclousness of the fact that Dick was driving with one hand, while the other held Helen's-in which polite delusion the teasing of Mr. Parkhurst was with difficulty induced to share. That night as Helen and Lottie sat to-

"No. my dear, you are not," said Lottie "You may think so now, but it wouldn't do. Your father will have something to say in the matter, and, besides, you would never be happy in Hillsborough. and you would never be happy with Dick." resentfully. "I am very fond of Hillsborough and I am sure I care a great deal for Mr. Carroll.

gether on the moonlit porch, Helen turned

"Lottie, I am going to marry Dick Car-

suddenly and announced dramatically:

"Oh, Helen, Helen, dear-can't you see what I mean? It's all very well for a month or two in summer, with moonlit piazzas, romantic rambles and a nice little flirtation to occupy your mind. But fancy. Helen, the whole year through-a round of household duties, no gayeties-except the sewing-circle and the weekly prayer-meeting-no theaters, no social life, a cramped and tasteless home, and a husband who says 'those kind' and persits in regarding "Never mind, Lottie, you'll see," said

Helen, bravely, though she inwardly winced "Exactly: I'll see," said Lottie, with philosophic composure.

The next day brought Helen an invitation to "spend the day" with Dick's mother, and Helen dutifully went. She gazed with interest at the neat cottage which she tried to realize would be her future home, and she tried to return with sisterly cordiality the effusive greeting she received from Nellle Carroll, who opened the door to her and went to call her mother. In the interval that elapsed, though

Helen tried not to take stock of the furnishings, the details of the pitifully crude room thrust themselves upon her. A glaring Brussels carpet, in which greens and reds strongly predominated, adorned the marble-topped table, on which lay the family Bible and a copy of Thompson's "Seasons," flanked by a lamp with an ornate china globe and a bit of red flannel (placed there with decorative intent) floating in the machine-embroidered plush, in a crude olive, surmounted by four vases of asshells, a china lamp and a glass globe of wax roses. One of the vases held a bunch other contained a huge bouquet of dried pampas grasses. On the walls were two ghastly crayons in cheap silvered frames, representing an aged and ill-favored coupwho Helen devoutly hoped were not Dick drove slowly, so that when they Dick's parents. Above the mantel hung an-Presently there entered a sharp-featured elderly woman, whom Helen with a sinkdinner, the fumes of which were then filling "I was tellin' Jim last night," she re- the house. She wore a dark-colored ging-

"Howdy-do, Helen," said Mrs. Carroll, in Mrs. Carroll wore a set of artificial teeth,

grinned at her from a taxidermist's win-"Thank you." said Helen, rather faintly, you were very kind to ask me." "Law, no," said Mrs. Carroll, looking more than ever like the shark as she smiled; "not at all. We haven't got much, and

weren't that kind." Helen murmured a polite, if rather incoherent, disclaimer. "I was sorter set on Dick's marrying Lucy Duckwall, to tell the truth," the She sold forty-odd dezen eggs last summer, and dressed herself on her egg-andbutter money. But Dick always did look high, and I don't know as I blame him. I reckon you're highly educated and right

to test Heien's capabilities took possession "Couldn't you play us a tune?" she asked. Poor Helen went to the screechy, reedy instrument and struggled through 'Rock of Ages" (at Mrs. Carroll's suggestion), reinforced by Nellie's blatant alto and an obligato by a key that stuck down and wailed dismally throughout the perform-

Dinner was served in a bare, carpetless

eyes fell upon the luckless organ, a desire

room, with paper of glaring, hideous description on the walls. On the table, which was covered with a turkey-red figured cloth and set with a flowered ironstone service, there was crowded every vegetable in season in lavish profusion. Nellie, flushed and fluttered, waited at table, loading Helen's plate and pressing the viands upon her with genuine Kentucky hospitality. After the meat course Nellie passed pie, which Helen found was supposed to be eaten without change of service, and it is to her credit that she helped herself with the same grace with which she would have partaken of an entree at a Pendennis Club dinner. After dinner Nellie brought out for Helen's inspection the family album, a vivid crimson plush affair, containing pictures of Mr. and Mrs. Carroll, of Jim, the son who was "out West," of Sallie, the eldest daughter who had married and was living in Indiana; of Nellie herself and of Dick at all ages, from a tintype representing him as a round-faced, sturdy little lad, to the one he had had taken for Helen, and which she had secretly destroyed as exaggerating his defects and exhibiting none of his picturesqueness.

Presently Mrs. Carroll joined them, and Helen spent a bad quarter of an hour. She and Neilie, with evident relish, hashed up for Helen's benefit all the gossip and scandal, both old and new, that was affoat in Hillsborough. Every prick of Nellie's needle in the red and white pillow-shams she was embroidering typified a homeyou care for me a little? Surely you must, thrust at the character of some acquaint-dear." He could not go on. Helen stood ance; and with the completion of each of motionless, frightened, breathless, yet not angry—not even displeased. What did it mean! Did she care for him? She tried to seemed to Helen full of "envy, hatred, malpicture him on the streets of her native ice, and all uncharitableness." She was glad when she could leave them and re-turn to Lottie. When she found a tele-

night at 16 o'clock. Tenth and Broadway station.

Then she hurried back, and, sinking wearily down on the porch steps at Lottie's feet, said sadly: "You were right, Lottie; I can't marry Dick, and I'm going home to morrow."

That night, at a rather late hour, Dick called. He was a trifle pale, and his hands were full of the mountain flower Helen was "They told me down town you were going

away, and I've come to say good-bye and bring you these. I thought you might like to take them with you." He held the flow-ers out to her and stood looking down wist-

"You are really going to-morrow, Helen?"

"Yes, Dick, I must." Then when are you coming back? When may I bring you home, Helen? Don't let it be long, dear! It will be so lonely here without you. You don't know how I love you, little girl.'

you to remember."

he asked

He looked so strong, so earnest as he stood there that Helen wondered uncomfortably if perhaps she were not the unworthy one. "Oh, Dick," she cried, stretching out her hands, while the blossoms fell unheeded at her feet, "it was all a mistake. I can never

marry you. I shall not come back-ever. Try to forgive me. Dick!" He took it so calmly that Helen felt a tinge of something like disappointment. "Very well, Helen." he said, quietly. "You know best. I won't urge you to marry me if you don't care for me, and I'll try to take my dismissal like a man. I guess won't see you again.' "No, I leave in the morning." She held

out her hand. "Good-bye, Mr. Carroll; you have been very kind to me, and I have made you a very poor return for all your kindness. Good-bye."

If she had been disappointed at his lack of emotion she had nothing to complain of now. He tried to speak, but he could not. He stood looking down at her, his strong, dark face drawn with the effort to control himself, and a look in the gray eyes that brought tears to Helen's own. Suddenly he caught her in his arms with a sort of sob that frightened Helen, and kissed her again and again. Then he slowly stopped and picked up a spray of the mountain laurer and placed it in Helen's hand.

"Keep it, Helen, for my sake," he said. "Good-bye, dear; I shall never forget you!" The next day Helen went home. In spite of herself, the remaining summer months were happy ones. There were moments, when she was tired or perhaps a trifle cross, when she would dignify the situation by imagining that her heart was aching for Dick, and she fell into the way of attributing her moods to this "secret grief." Certain it was that she refused at least three eligible offers during the ensuing winter without other apparent reason. Lottie's letters at first made frequen mention of Dick, who, she said, seemed to be "taking it very hard"; but as the winter wore on Lottie spoke of him less and less "I can't see why," said Helen, rather she was out of sorts or in a discontented mood that Helen herself thought of him. She spent the following summer at Bar Harbor, and when she came home in Sep-

> St. Louis, which was formally announced a week or two later. One night, shortly after her return home Helen received a letter from Lottle Parkhurst, full of kindly sentiments and all good wishes for her future happiness. "I have a bit of news for you," Lottle wrote. "Dick Carroll and Lucy Duckwall were married at Jellico last week. You would never recognize Dick now. He has become very stout, and grown a beard, and Lucky is as pretty and happy a little bride as you could wish to see. I congratulate you. Helen, no less upon your escape from what would have been a most unfortunate match than upon your approaching mar-

tember the society papers were full of her

rumored engagement to young Vantine, of

riage, which I am sure will be a happy Helen laid down the letter and stood for a moment gazing straight before her, turning absently upon her finger her glittering engagement ring; then suddenly she turned to her desk and took from an inner drawer something which she held in her hand for a moment before she cast it into the glowing grate. There was a sort of appropriateness-an "earth to earth, dust to dust" quality-in the action that appealed to Helen's keen sense of the fitness of things; and her satisfaction in this, with perhaps the secret consciousness that Lottie was right, outwelghed the little pang with which she saw crumble into ashes a withered spray of mountain laurel. -Leigh Gordon Giltner, in

> HUMOR OF THE DAY. Too Much for Him.

Monthly.

Daughter-George says he fears he can't support me in the style I'm accustomed to. The Father-Marry him, anyhow, I can't keep it up much longer myself.

Cause for Sorrow.

New York World. Askins-I suppose Sprocketts was terribly cut up when his wife eloped with another man on her husband's bicycle? Grimshaw-Yes; he said he couldn't afford to buy another wheel for two months.

Terrible Panishment. "Father caught you smoking one of his cigars, did he? And what did he do-lick

"What then?" "Made me smoke it-right through." Waiting.

Cincinnati Enquirer. "Have you no pride at all?" asked the Earnest Worker. "Nup." said the Cumberer of the Ground "I am waltin' till it gits cheaper. Pride, you know, must have a fall."

Makes a Difference.

Spare Moments. Teacher-Now here is an example in men tal arithmetic. How old would a person be to-day who was born in 1868? Tommy-Please, mum, was it a man or a woman?

Precise. Counsel-Well, after the witness gave you a blow, what happened? Prisoner-He gave we a third one. Counsel-You mean a second one. Prisoner-No, sir; I landed him the sec-

Might Have Been Worse.

"He has broken my heart," wailed the beautiful girl. "There, there; don't take on so," said her friend in tones of pity; "it might have been

Movements on Foot. New York Advertiser.

Jinks-There is a man who has a number of movements on foot for making Jinks-I don't know his name, but he's a dancing teacher.

Will Take Them All.

Teacher-Let us pray for the day when in our country there will be no North, no South, no East, no West. Now, what is the great agency that will accomplish this Class-Chicago.

Proof. Cleveland Leader.

"Sometimes a horrible doubt comes over me, and I can't believe that you love me more than you did your first wife. "Yet in all of the four years that we lived together she never wore a waist that hooked up on the shoulder, because she didn't dare to ask me to fasten it for her.' And he was never doubted again.

Two Puffs.

Cleveland Plain Dealer. "What's that queer thing Mrs. Trimble has about her neck?" "That's a Watteau ruff. Is that her husband with her?" "Watteau ruff he looks like, too."

A Grievous Insult. Colonel Swilson (of Kentucky)-I hev

bin grossly insulted, suh, by ouah mayor Major Bourbon-How so, kuhnel. Colonel Swilson (indignantly)-He had th effront'ry, sur, t' ask me t' suhve as a membah of th' watah works boahd. He Wouldn't Tell.

Parson Goodman-Do you know where little boys go who go fishing on Sunday Bad Boy-Aw, say-I ain't givin' away snaps, yer know. If yer lookin' fer a good fishin' hole w'y don't yer go and find it yerself, same as evrybody else does? Yer must t'ink I'm a jay. Then He Left.

It had been time for him to go for nearly an hour, but still he lingered. Then, in some way, the subject of telegraph codes came up, and he said:

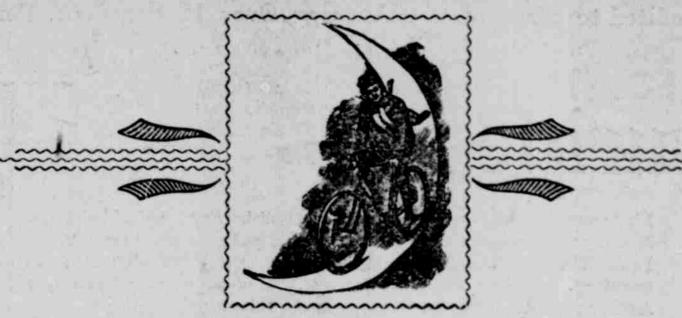
"Speaking of ciphers, the"—

"Now, den't be egotistical," she inter-Then, at last, he decided that it was

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diseases of Men and

CLASS SIX-Chronic

diseases of the Nerv-

CLASS SEVEN

of the Human

apolis Infirmary.

OFFERINGS OF THE POETS. Rocking the Baby.

hear her rocking the baby-Her room is next to mine-And I fancy the dimpled arms That round her neck entwine, As she rocks, and rocks the baby, In the room just next to min

hear her rocking the baby Each day the twilight comes In the "baby bye" she hums.

I can see the restless fingers Playing yith "mamma's rings," And sweet hitle smiling, pouting mouth That to her's in kissing clings. As she rocks and sings to the baby, And dreams as she rocks and sings.

hear her rocking the baby,

Slower and slower now, And I know she is leaving her good-night kiss On its eyes and cheek and brow. From her rocking, rocking, rocking,

I wonder would she start, Could she know, through the wall between us, She is rocking on a heart, While my empty arms are aching For a form they may not press, And my emptier heart is breaking In its desolate loneliness.

list to the rocking, rocking, In the room just next to mine, And breathe a prayer in silence, At a mother's broken sin;ine, r the woman who rocks the baby In the room just next to mine. -Madge Morris.

The Chaperon. I take my chaperon to the play-She thinks she's taking me. And the gilded youth who owns the box, A proud young man is he-But how would his young heart be hurt If he could only know

Her eves beneath her snowy hair They sparkle young as mine; There's scarce a wrinkle in her hand, So delicate and fine. And when my chaperon is seen, They come from everywhere— The dear old boys with silvery hair, With old-time grace and old-time air, To greet their old-time queen.

That not for his sweet sake I go

Nor yet to se the trifling show

But to see my chaperon flirt.

They bow as my young Midas here Will never learn to bow (The dancing masters do not teach That gracious reverence now); With voices quavering just a bit, They play their old part through, They talk of folks who used to woo, Of hearts that broke in fifty-two-Now none the worse for it.

And as those aged crickets chirp I watch my chaperon's face, A new and tender grace-And in her happy eyes I see Her youth awakening bright, With all its hope, desire, delight— Ah me! I wish that I were quite

As young-as young as she. -H. C. Bunner.

A Lyric. As on the clear hillsides we walked together A gleam of purple passed over the sea, And, giad with the joy of summer weather, My love turned quickly and looked on me. Ah, the glad summer weather, the fair summer

weather! Ah, the purple shadow on hill and sea! And I looked in her eyes as we walked together, And knew the shy secret she fain would hide, And we went hand in hand through the blossom-She who now was my sweetheart and I by her For the shade was the shadow of Love's wing Which bears, as he rises, the secrets we hide.

Now, come cloud or sunshine, come joy or weep It can be no longer as 'twas before. Just a shadow of change o'er the soul comes And farewell to the joyance and freedom For it crossed Love's face where he lies a-sleeping. And he soars awaking, nor slumbers more.

All-Saints' Eve.

Oh, when the ghosts go by, Under the empty trees. Here in my house I sit and cry, My head upon my knees. Innumerable, white.

Like mist they fill the square; The bolt is drawn, the hatch made tight, The shutter barred there. There walks one small and glad, New to the churchyard clod; My little lad, my little lad, A single year with God.

I sit and hide my head Until they all are past, Under the empty trees the dead That go full soft and fast. Up to my chamber dim Back to my bed I plod;

Oh, would I were a ghost with him, And faring back to God. -Lizette Woodworth Reese. The Rose.

When the rose came I loved the rose, And thought of none beside, Forgetting all the other flowers, And all the others died; And morn and noon, and sun and showers, And all things loved the rose, Who only half returned my love, Blooming alike for those. I was the rival of a score

Of loves on gaudy wing-The nightingale I would implore For pity not to sing. Each called her his; still I was glad To wait or take my part; I loved the rose, who might have had The fairest lily's heart. -Arthur O'Shaughnessy.

Love's Rosary. The hours I spent with thee, dear heart, Are as a string of pearls to me; I count them over, every one apart,

Each hour a pearl, each pearl a prayer, To still a heart in absence wrung; I tell each bead unto the end, and there O memories that bless—and burn! O barren gain—and bitter loss. I kiss each bead and strive at last to learn

To kiss the cross,

To kiss the cross. Not They Who Soar. Not they who soar, but they who plod Their rugged way, unhelped, to God Are heroes; they who higher fare, And, flying, fan the upper air, Miss all the toll that hugs the sod. 'Tis they whose backs have felt the roo

Whose feet have pressed the path unshed.

May smile upon defeated care,

Not they who soar High up there are no thorns to prod,
Nor bowlders lurking 'neath the clod
To turn the keenness of the share,
For flight is ever free and rare;
But heroes they the soil who've trod,
Not they who soar.

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